

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AF-06 ARA-10 EA-09 NEA-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAJ-01 OMB-01 SAM-01

EB-07 COME-00 OFA-01 DLOS-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 AGR-10

AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIEP-02 DOTE-00 EPA-04

ERDA-07 FMC-02 INT-05 JUSE-00 NSF-02 OES-05 SAL-01

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TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, IS, UK

SUBJ: LETTERS FROM UK MISSION CONCERNING UK/ICELAND COD WAR

REF: USUN 414

1. UN SECRETARIAT HAS CIRCULATED TWO LETTERS TO SECURITY COUNCIL FROM UK MISSION CONCERNING UK-ICELANDIC MARITIME PROBLEM.

2. QTE: LETTER DATED 18 FEBRUARY 1976 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I. OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

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I HAVE THE HONOUR TO REFER TO THE LETTER WHICH THE

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ICELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL ON 29 JANUARY
(S/11954).

IN THAT LETTER THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ICELAND
ATTEMPTED TO REFUTE THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN THE STATEMENT
OF THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON 16 DECEMBER 1975 (S/PV.1866,
P. 13):

"DURING THE 1960S THE ICELANDIC FISHERMEN SERIOUSLY
OVERFISHED THE HERRING STOCKS AROUND ITS SHORES, WHICH
BY 1967 HAD SUNK TO A CRITICALLY LOW LEVEL."

THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT STAND BY THAT STATEMENT.
THE HERRING STOCK OFF ICELAND IS A MIXTURE CONSISTING
PARTLY OF FISH SPAWNED OFF THE COAST OF NORWAY AND PARTLY
OF FISH SPAWNED OFF THE COAST OF ICELAND. THE LATTER
FORMED THE MAJOR PART OF THE TOTAL HERRING CATCH IN WATERS
AROUND ICELAND DURING MOST OF THE YEARS DURING THE 1960S,
AND IT IS THEY WHICH WERE, IN THE VIEW OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
GOVERNMENT, OVERFISHED BY ICELANDIC FISHERMEN. A RECENT
ICELANDIC ASSESSMENT OF "ICELANDIC HERRING" CONTAINS THE
FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH:

"IT APPEARS THAT THE DRAMATIC DECLINE OF THE ICELANDIC
HERRING STOCKS WAS PRIMARILY DUE TO A RECRUITMENT FAILURE
DURING A PERIOD OF HIGH FISHING MORTALITY AND THE STOCKS
WERE REDUCED TO SUCH A LOW LEVEL THAT THEY BECAME VIRTUALLY
UNABLE TO PRODUCE AVERAGE OR LARGE YEAR CLASSES." (DOCUMENT
CM1973/H:4 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE EXPLORATION
OF THE SEA.)

THE ANNEX TO THE LETTER OF 19 JANUARY 1976 FROM THE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ICELAND CONSISTS OF AN EXTRACT
FROM A REPORT BY THE LIAISON COMMITTEE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL FOR THE EXPLORATION OF THE SEA WHICH, IN ITS OWN
WORDS, "DEALS SOLELY WITH THE NORWEGIAN SPRING SPAWNING
COMPONENT OF THE ATLANTO-SCANDIAN STOCK" (SEE PARA. 69
OF THE REPORT). THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM ON 16 DECEMBER 1975 CONCERNED ICELANDIC
SPAWNED HERRING, NOT NORWEGIAN.

AN ACCOUNT OF WHAT IN FACT HAPPENED IN CONNEXION WITH
THE ATLANTO-SCANDIAN HERRING WAS SET OUT IN THE MEMORIAL
SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT TO THE INTERNATIONAL
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COURT OF JUSTICE ON 31 JULY 1973 IN THE FISHERIES JURISDICTION
CASE (UNITED KINGDOM V ICELAND) (I.C.J. PLEADINGS, FISHERIES
JURISDICTION VOL. 1, AT PP. 294-296). PARAGRAPHS 85
AND 86 OF THE MEMORIAL REFER PARTICULARLY TO THE DESTRUCTION
OF ICELANDIC SPAWNED HERRING. (DOC S/11996, 25 FEB 76) UNQTE.

3. QTE: LETTER DATED 18 FEBRUARY 1976 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES,
A.I. OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN

IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO REFER TO THE LETTER, TOGETHER WITH
ITS ANNEX, WHICH THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ICELAND
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL ON 23 JANUARY
(S/11944) CONCERNING THE INCIDENT WHICH TOOK PLACE BETWEEN
BRITISH AND ICELANDIC VESSELS ON 11 DECEMBER.

THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT HAVE CONSIDERED THESE
DOCUMENTS. NOTHING THEY CONTAIN CAUSES THE UNITED KINGDOM
GOVERNMENT TO WISH TO ALTER ANYTHING IN THE STATEMENT WHICH
THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM MADE IN
THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON 16 DECEMBER 1975.

THE DOCUMENTS CIRCULATED AT THE REQUEST OF THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF ICELAND CANNOT OBSCURE THE BASIC FACTS OF
THE INCIDENT WHICH ARE AS FOLLOWS. THE BRITISH VESSELS
HAD BEEN SHELTERING FROM A STORM AND TRANSFERRING WATER
IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE INCIDENT. THEY WERE ALL UNARMED.
THEY WERE FIRED ON BY THE ICELANDIC COASTGUARD VESSEL.
THEY DID NOT PROVOKE THE INCIDENT IN ANY WAY. THE COLLISIONS
WERE CAUSED BY THE MANOEUVRING OF THE COASTGUARD VESSEL
AT A TIME WHEN THE BRITISH VESSELS WERE MAKING FOR THE OPEN SEA.

WITH REGARD TO THE INTIMATION MADE TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY
IN REYKJAVIK THAT I MIGHT BE REPRESENTED AT THE INQUIRY
(P. 28 OF THE ANNEX TO THE ICELANDIC PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE'S
LETTER OF 23 JANUARY), THE SUGGESTION WAS DECLINED IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THE GENERAL POLICY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT
WITH REGARD TO SUCH PROCEEDINGS BEFORE FOREIGN COURTS.
IT WILL IN ANY EVENT BE OBSERVED THAT THE STATED PURPOSE OF
THE INQUIRY ("TO INQUIRE INTO THE RAMMINGS OF THE COASTGUARD
VESSEL 'THOR' BY THE BRITISH TUGBOATS (STAR AQUARIUS'
AND 'LLOYDSMAN')") PREJUDGED THE DISPUTED ISSUES OF FACT.

THE REFERENCE, ON PAGE 6 OF THE ANNEX TO "THE BRITISH
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UNDERWATER MINEFIELD" RELATES TO MINES LAID BY BRITAIN
IN THE 1940S BUT CLEARED BY HERE AFTER THE WAR. (DOC
11995, 25 FEB 76) UNQTE.
BENNETT

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